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Letter dated 8 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith a note on the allegations contained in the letter from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation dated 10 February 2016 (S/2016/143) (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Y. Halit **Çevik**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 8 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The note attached to the letter of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation is composed of baseless allegations.

Becoming a direct party in the Syrian conflict, Russia has been responsible for civilian deaths, havoc and destruction in Syria in proportions and effectiveness that can only be matched by the regime.

Independent studies confirm that the Russian Federation accounts for up to 70 per cent of civilian deaths that are taking place in Syria. Since its military involvement began in Syria on 30 September 2015, Russian air strikes have already claimed over 1,300 lives. Ninety per cent of these victims are civilians. The attacks left over 2,000 people wounded. A note pointing out these casualties in further detail is enclosed to the present note (enclosure I).

Russia today is also directly responsible for the indiscriminate and total destruction of civilian infrastructure, another common denominator with the regime's practices. This, too, adds to the humanitarian tragedy at a time when the international community is desperately trying to get sustained humanitarian aid to the Syrian people living under besieged areas also in relation to Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), which the Russian Federation helped draft, but effectively blocked the implementation thereof.

Deliberate targeting of hospitals, schools, food stocks, water and electricity distribution networks amounts to war crimes.

Russia entered the Syrian theatre under the pretext of fighting Daesh/ISIL and terrorism. After over 8,000 strikes, 90 per cent of which targeted the opposition elements, there is not a single shred of evidence that Russian strikes made any impact against Daesh/ISIL. Terrorism has grown and spread.

The baseless allegations against Turkey, hosting the more than 2.5 million Syrians, are being levelled by Russia against this backdrop. Russia's and the regime's continued attacks since the cessation of hostilities put the entire political process at risk and therefore carry the potential for additional mass movement of Syrians in literally tens of thousands to our borders.

If the Russian Federation is serious about fighting terrorism, it should move its focus on the regime in a serious effort to get the political process to become functional. The Russian Federation's current course is only adding fuel to the fire by also directly participating in the conflict by raising the level and intensity of the violence. The only way out of this vicious cycle is ensuring a genuine political transition on the basis of the Geneva communiqué.

Turkey has a commendable track record in terms of countering the threat of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), as well as showing close and transparent cooperation with all countries. A detailed note on our efforts to counter the FTF threat is attached (enclosure II). Ironically, Turkey has intercepted potential FTFs with Russian connections and informed the latter about their deportation numerous times in spite of the lack of cooperation by the Government of the Russian Federation, which is contrary to its own declared interests. Furthermore, news

reports regarding Russians travelling to Syria to join Daesh/ISIL with their Government's approval remain a great concern.

Russia's allegations are directed to shift the focus of the international community's attention from its actions and the real issue, which is ending the conflict in Syria. We invite Russia to live up to the responsibility that Security Council membership entails.

Enclosure I

Civilian casualties due to Russian air strikes in Syria

Date	*Location*	*Casualties*
07.10.2015	Latakia/Turkmen Mountain	7 dead
15-21.10.2015	Idlib/Sarakib, Khirbet El Coz	40 dead/120 wounded
	Latakia/Salma, Kansaba	
	Hama-Idlib/Mansurah, Tel Vasit, Kafer Zeyta, Sheikh Moustafa	
	Aleppo/Han Toman, Zitan, Zerbe, Hanasir, Kafer Jum, Aradah, Zerba	
	Homs/Telbise, Um Sharshuh, Tayr Mallah ve Ghantou	
	Damascus/Cobar, Duma, Marj El Sultan, Deyr Asafir	
22-26.10.2015	Aleppo/Kafer Abid, Balas, Abtin, Karasi, Han Toman, Zerbe, Barkum, Kafer Jum, Han Asal, Anadan	45 dead/55 wounded
	Homs/Telbise, Tayr Mallah, Al Ghankou, Sultan, Allus, Umm Al Karamil, Tayr Mallah, Dar Al Kebire, Rastan	
	Latakia/Salma	
	Idlib/Han Seyhun, Hass	
	Hama/Ikerbat, Latamne, Tel Vasit, Al Mansura, Kafer Zeyta, Kafer Nabuda	
	Damascus/East Gota-Mersaba	
	Daraa/Kafer Shams, Harra, Anter	
31.10.2015	Aleppo/Meskane (Mosque)	50 dead/80 wounded
01.11.2015	Aleppo/Fardos, Sukkari, Seyf El Devle	60 dead/100 wounded
27.11.2015	Aleppo/Azaz	10 dead
29.11.2015	Aleppo/Azaz	12 dead/20 wounded
29.11.2015	Idlib/Ariha	45 dead/60 wounded
07.12.2015	Aleppo/Hulluk	6 dead/14 wounded
13.12.2015	Damascus/East Gota, Duma, Hammuriye, Sakba, Zemelka, Irbin	65 dead/120 wounded
17.12.2015	Aleppo/Azaz	7 dead/8 wounded
20.12.2015	Idlib/City centre	20 dead/30 wounded
22.12.2015	Damascus/East Gota-Bazyna	35 dead/50 wounded
24.12.2015	Aleppo/Rashidin	10 dead
25.12.2015	Aleppo/Azaz (Women and Children's Hospital)	13 dead/20 wounded

Date	*Location*	*Casualties*
26.12.2015	Aleppo/City centre	10 dead
26.12.2015	Idlib/Jerjenaz (Kindergarten)	7 dead/15 wounded
27.12.2015	Homs/Tedmur	15 dead
27.12.2015	Latakia/Al Howr; Aleppo/Al Bab; Homs/Tedmur	10 dead/20 wounded
28.12.2015	Aleppo/Tel Rifat	15 dead/15 wounded
29-30.12.2015	Aleppo/Tel Rifat	20 dead/35 wounded
31.12.2015	Aleppo/Azaz (including women and children)	10 dead/15 wounded
03.01.2016	Aleppo/Azaz	25 dead/10 wounded
04.01.2016	Aleppo/Mare; Latakia/Kurdish Mountain-Salma	6 dead/15 wounded
04.01.2016	Homs/Rastan	2 dead
08.01.2016	Aleppo/Tel Rifat	5 dead/15 wounded
08.01.2016	Rakka (mostly women and children)	10 dead
09.01.2016	Idlib/Maarat El Numan, Han Seyhun, Sarakib	50 dead/110 wounded
10.01.2016	Daraa	6 dead
11.01.2016	Aleppo/Anjarah, Kafer Naha (schools)	30 dead (all children)
11.01.2016	Homs/Rastan, Sheikh Ali, Maarat Al Artik	7 dead/7 wounded
12.01.2016	Aleppo/Hayyan	5 dead/6 wounded
12.01.2016	Aleppo/Munbic	30 dead/40 wounded
14.01.2016	Aleppo/North	7 dead/20 wounded
14.01.2016	Aleppo/Bab	7 dead
15.01.2016	Aleppo/Mayer, Marastel Khan	2 dead
15.01.2016	Aleppo/Munbic	2 dead/5 wounded
16.01.2016	Aleppo/Haritan, Deyr Hafir	2 dead/12 wounded
16.01.2016	Rakka	30 dead
17.01.2016	Homs/Rastan; Aleppo/Deyr Jemal	9 wounded
17.01.2016	Aleppo/Munbic	40 dead
22.01.2016	Idlib/Bab El Hava, Sarmada, Dana	10 dead/20 wounded
22.01.2016	Aleppo/Munbic; Deyr Ez Zor/Buleyl	10 dead
23.01.2016	Aleppo/Bzaa	5 dead

Date	*Location*	*Casualties*
23.01.2016	Deyr Ez Zor	10 dead/20 wounded
24-25.01.2016	Idlib/Salkin	20 dead/25 wounded
24-25.01.2016	Idlib	10 dead/10 wounded
24-25.01.2016	Aleppo/Al Bab, Ahras	10 dead
January 2016 (third week)	Deyr Ez Zor/Hasham	100 dead
28.01.2016	Idlib/Kafer Takkarim; Homs/Ghantu	25 dead/30 wounded
30.01.2016	Ghariyat Al Gharbiyah, Azaz, Umm Sharshuh	11 dead
31.01.2016	Homs/Kissin	20 wounded
01.02.2016	Aleppo/Anadan	4 dead/20 wounded
2-3.02.2016	Aleppo/North	20 dead/30 wounded
04.02.2016	Aleppo/Meshat, Kallaseh, Firdevs, Halluk, Sahaar	30 dead/50 wounded
05.02.2016	Aleppo/Sakhur (Mosque)	15 dead/30 wounded
09.02.2016	Aleppo/Azaz, Kafer Kalbin	15 dead
15.02.2016	Aleppo/Azaz	10 dead/30 wounded
15.02.2016	Idlib/Maraat El Numan, Al Hamidiyah, Sarakib (MSF hospitals)	5 dead/30 wounded

Enclosure II

Turkey's efforts to counter the foreign terrorist fighter threat

Turkey has been countering the threat of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) since 2011 and called for source countries to take necessary legal and administrative measures to prevent the departure and travel of FTFs from their countries.

In this regard, in the framework of national measures, Turkey formed a no-entry list in 2011, which now includes more than 37,000 names; more than 3,000 foreigners have been deported since 2011 and, in the context of measures against FTFs, additional security measures have been introduced, including new risk analysis units at the airports and transport hubs, enhanced passenger screening and security checks in regions adjacent to the Syrian border. Until now, around 7,500 people have been checked by these units, and more than 1,800 of them were denied entry to Turkey.

Turkey officially informs the embassies in Ankara by note verbale about the travel itinerary of foreigners to be deported and who are suspected to be FTFs. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested relevant contact information from embassies in Ankara for urgent notifications.

Since the beginning of 2015, as a result of Turkish law enforcement operations, 2,314 individuals, including 970 foreign nationals, have been detained and 744 persons have been put under arrest due to their affiliation with Daesh/ISIL and El Nusra terrorist groups.

Turkey has encouraged and requested information sharing from all countries to support its efforts against the FTF threat, including the Russian Federation. In February 2015, during the White House Summit against Violent Extremism, the President of the Federal Security Agency of the Russian Federation declared that there were 1,800 FTFs from Russia. At that time, the number of citizens of the Russian Federation in the no-entry list of Turkey was not more than one third of that declared number, revealing the lack of sharing of information and intelligence regarding FTFs from the Russian Federation.

In addition to bilateral cooperation, Turkey also encouraged and called for the use of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) to curb the travel of FTFs. In 2014, Turkey received 24 bulletins or diffusion messages for search warrants from the Russian Federation through INTERPOL. In 2015 this number increased to 226.

Despite the lack of cooperation from the Russian Federation to prevent the travel of FTFs, Turkish authorities have not spared any efforts to intercept potential FTFs with Russian connections. As such, since the end of 2014, Turkey has informed the Russian Federation about the deportation of 276 individuals for FTF-related suspicions.

On the other hand, Turkey is concerned to learn about the activities of Russian citizens who, according to the declarations made by Ramzan Kadyrov to State media organs of the Russian Federation, travelled to take part in the Daesh/ISIL terrorist group with the consent of Russian Federation authorities (*The Moscow Times*, 8 February 2016).

Further, recent INTERPOL bulletins also reveal that more than 40 citizens of a Commonwealth of Independent States member country have travelled to Syria to join Daesh/ISIL after a period of residency as migrant workers in the Russian Federation.

Thus, Turkey is concerned with the fact that, due to lack of proper measures against violent extremism and radicalization, as well as inefficient air travel border control for outbound passengers by the Russian Federation, this country has become a hub and an unobstructed transit route for potential foreign terrorist fighters.